

T H E
Compleat Marksman:
O R,
The T R U E A R T
O F
SHOOTING-FLYING:
A
P O E M.

L O N D O N :

Printed for S. SMITH, in Pater-noster Row. 1759.

(Price One Shilling.)

THE
Compleat Marksmen:

OR
The True Art
OF
SHOOTING-FLYING:

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T O A L L

Qualified SPORTSMEN.

GENTLEMEN,

TH E utmost of my Ambition in composing and publishing this little Poem, was only to oblige and instruct my *Fellow Sportsmen*; and to communicate to them the Knowledge I have acquired and treasured up in this difficult Mistry.

I do not pretend to say that bare *Theory* alone will make a *Marksmen*; but it must be confessed, by every impartial Person that the Rules here set down, when joined with a little Practice, will compleat the Workman, or raise him to a very high Degree of Perfection in this agreeable and entertaining Sport.

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sured up in this difficult Military.
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skilful; but it must be assisted, by
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T H E

Compleat Marksman.

Sportsmen where'er ye deign to dwell,
In Mansion, Hall, or Straw-rooft Cell,
With *Chloe* in the splendid Seat,
Or *Bridget* in a Cott's Retreat.

Here

Here come, without Distinction all,

And listen to a Brother's Call.

For you he dares to court the Muse,

Divested of all sordid Views ;

And if the Poet ye despise,

He hopes the Sportsman ye will prize.

Since Poetry is not his Trade,

Regard the Substance, not the Shade.

When Phœbus, that illustrious Don,

His gold-wrought Trappings hangs upon

The

The Steed's, which draw his Chariot gay
In *English* plain—by Break of Day,
Arise, be clad, and haste away.

And should your Wives display their
[Charms,
In Raptures clasp ye in their Arms ;

And by each Blandishment of Love
That Wish can prompt, or Passion move
To stay your Rising with the Sun,
Nor leave them for your Dog and Gun.

Regardless of such wheedling Art,
With Speed arise, with Speed depart,

Ah ! gaze not on the melting Eye,
Nor catch the Waftage of a Sigh.
Tell them your Health some Air requires,
To kindle Love's extinguish'd Fires ;
That Morning Exercife is good
To spur the lazy-pacing Blood,
New ftrings the Nerves and fires the Heart,
And fills with Vigour ev'ry Part.

And now my Gun-delighting Friend,
These Maxims let me recommend.
Before you leave your pleasing Home,
Provide a little Cordial Rum :

A proper Wicker-bottle fill.

That will contain about a Gill.

But, let your prudent Care be such,

As not to drink one Drop too much:

A Sip is good to keep you warm,

A Sip too much will do you Harm :

Imprimis—it will cloud the Eye,

And make you hold your Piece awry,

Secundo—if you hold it right,

Your hand will shake, and mock the Sight,

Thus either Way it spoils your Aim,

And then, my Friend, farewell the *Game* !

A *Morning-Sot*, without Dispute,
Can never aim, though he may shoot.

The *Marksmen* should the Bottle spare,
At least, of all Excess beware ;
For if too frequent Draughts he takes
Some fatal Step perhaps he makes :
Falls down and hurts his addled Pate,
Or breaks his Shin against a Gate,
Or careless slips into a Bog
A Turkey kills or shoots a Hog.

Procure your *Tackle*, *Gun*, and all,
And then your cheerful *Pointers* call ;

But, prithee, don't forget to bring
 Into the Field, a *Partridge-Wing* ;
 And having cleans'd, with utmost Care,
 The *Touch-Hole* from the Dust and Smear,
 Proceed to *charge*, and prime the Gun ;
 (This must not *Over-Night* be done,
 For, if 'tis loaded *Over-Night*,
 The Prime will hiss, and not be right,)
 Prime not too full, 'twill merit Blame :
 The hanging Fire will spoil your Aim :
 The Reason is, if I must tell,
 The Pressure will the Flame repel.

In Charging, those who most excell,
 Take care to ram the *Powder* well;
 But then, it must not be forgot,
 To ram, with Tenderness, the Shot:
 One *Third* of *Nitrous Dust* will do,
 And take of *Shot* the other *Two*,
 Then search for *Tow*, the Whole to close,
 The fittest Thing that can be chose.

Be careful to observe my *Hints*;
 Provide a *Turn-screw*, *Worm*, and *Flints*;
 For tho' no Ills your Sport molest,
 'Tis good to guard—*Probatum est*.

When

When thus prepar'd, your Sport pursue,
 Regardless of the Dirt or Dew :

Let Sluggards doze on downy Beds,
 And there repose their aching Heads.

Let pamper'd Mortals stay at Home,
 Such Wretches are unfit to come.

Whoever fails in any Part,
 Can ne'er be Master of the Art.

Not eager, or without Concern;
 A Medium in your Actions learn :
 Be sure *Take Time*, — the chiefest Rule,
 That's practic'd in the *Marksmen's* School ;

Most giddy Youths the Sport confound,
By firing on improper Ground.

True Sportsmen *Stoic-like* should be
Quite easy, unconcern'd, and free;
Not eager; firing off at Randam,
Or let a tim'rous Fear command 'em.

Suppose us going now, my Friend,
In rural Sports, the Day to spend ;
Suppose we saw a *Pheasant* spring,
And cleave the Air with gawdy Wing

He

He mounts—Aim—Aim, I say, and fire !

Bravo ! You've granted my Desire !--

He's down !—Well done, Buck, I declare—

Quick, quick !—Recharge ! nor let the Air
Intrude.—

The Barrel will the Powder heat,

And make the Charge the more complete ;

The *Touck-hole* too, if Haste you make,

More freely will the Powder take.

Some, unacquainted with the Art,

Will cleanse with labour ev'ry part,

Until the Piece has lost its Heat,

And there succeeds a clammy Sweat.

A Partridge sprung, Sir, Ha!—she's gone!
You'd Time enough!—you shot too soon!
Not *Twenty Yards* in Sight!—for Shame! }
You don't deserve a Marksman's Name!— }
You'd maul'd her with a proper Aim! }
Permit her *Forty Yards* to go,
The *Gun* will surer Mischief sow :
But when too near, the Case is this ;
You either mangle her, or miss.
And if too far you slightly wound,
Nor make the Game descend to Ground ;
In shooting, all Extremes refuse ;
Take my Advice, a Medium choose.

But when the Trees confound the Scene,
 You cannot keep the Golden Mean ;
 When *Woodcocks* dodge, we know no Laws,
 Necessity admits no Pause.

In *Ersb* of Barley, Oats or Wheat,
 Where charming *Quail* and *Partridge* fit,
 Or in the *Springs*, where lovely *Snite*,
 Will bore, to please their Appetite ;
 Or where the *Polt* in open Heath,
 Moves in an even Line from Death ;
 There, if the Piece be fully prov'd,
 Pursue the Mark when far remov'd ;

Raise up the Mouth *above* the Game,

And fire away, with careful Aim.

But judge before you execute ;

Take Aim, and not at Random shoot.

The *Cock* is indirect in Flight,

Like rapid Lightning flies the Snite,

'Till Distance overcomes her Fright,

Then straight along they gently fly,

And slightly wounded, fall, and lie.

By Length and Motion of their Wings,

(Which are such long, such cumb'rous Things)

So

So easy maim'd, when Twenty fall,
Perhaps none's dead amongst them all.

When *Snites* receive a mortal Wound,
With steady Wings they skilm around ;
Expanded open like a Kite,
They smoothly swim 'till spent in Flight :
And where they fall *sans* Motion lie,
And seldom move, but silent die.

The gen'ral flying Marks are *Five*,
By those who to Perfection dive :

Ob-

Observe, of *Lineals*, *Two* there are;
A *Traverse* and a *Circular*;
The *Fifth Oblique*, which none can teach.
But Practice, Perfectness can reach.

When Birds fly onward to your Face,
Stand still awhile, and let them pass;
Unless some Trees behind you stand;
Then manage with a careful Hand;
Advance the Mouth above her Head,
And Ten to One you strike her dead.

When Birds fly from you in a Line,
With Care, I may pronounce them thine;

Observe, with Skill, to raise your Piece,
'Till there's no open under Space,
Betwixt the Object and the Sight,
Then fire away, and stop her Flight.

Now I've the *Lineal Mark* display'd,
You stand in Need of futher Aid ;
The *Traverse* next employs my Pen,
Not understood by many Men.

The *Traverse Cross*-Mark Skill requires :—
I've often heard your Country 'Squires,

In talking of this Traverse Shoot,
 Sustain a very high Dispute.
 Before the Bird, some always fire,
 But that will nicest Time require ;
 For should you too much Space admit,
 The *Shot* will fly too quick to hit :
 And if you give too little Space,
 That's full as hazardous a Case.

The *Partridge*, flying swift as Wind,
 Will dart, and bilk her Death behind.
 Which makes it difficult to guess ;——
 Your Time must be exact, or miss.

If you will my Instructions take,
You need not such strict Measures make.
Or take such wond'rous Pains, and Care ;
And stand a surer Chance by far.

Observe, that ev'ry skilful Spark,
Will strive to gain a *Lineal Mark* ;
Which better will Eight Feet allow,
Than will the *Cross-Mark*, Inches two.

When Forty Yards to Left, or Right,
The rapid *Partridge* steers her Flight ;

Have at her with a *sideling* Line,
 I make no Doubt but she'll be thine :
 But just behind, the Shot will glance,
 And, if you kill, 'tis all a Chance.

The Mark which Circular is term'd,
 With steady Care must be perform'd,
 Attend the Motion of the Bird,
 'Till she a proper Mark afford ;
 Obtain with Skill, and cautious Scan,
 The furthest Lineal Point you can ;

With

With Patience, move your Piece around, }
 'Till you a proper Aim have found, }
 Then fire ! and bring her to the Ground. }

See Jewel stands !—a Covey !—stay !
 And have Regard to what I say :
 When scatt'ring Birds in Numbers rise,
 And various Marks confound the Eyes,
 Be sure confine your Aim to *One*,
 Regarding none but *That* alone.
 Experienc'd Men of *One* make sure,
 And rest content with *One* secure :

The

The scatter'd Covey, if you wait,
May yet be your's by future Fate.

Young giddy Fools, who vainly hope,
By Chance, to pick a Number up,
Do often find themselves deceiv'd,
And with the random Fire retriev'd ;
Tho' many they may slightly wound,
They'll see none bounding on the Ground.

Come on, my Friend, the sultry Morn,
Draws forth the Coveys from the Corn ;

Or

Or else some Numbers may be found,
In fertil Fields, the Wheat around,
Sitting still to taste the Sun,
Or, clucking to some Coppice run,
To spurn the Dust, and waste the Noon ;
Some let us kill, and some disperse,
And eat our Gains, while Setters curse.

When what the golden Harvest yields,
Is carry'd from the fertil Fields,
The Farmer's roomy Barn to crack,
And lusty *Roger, Tom and Jack,*

With

With sturdy Blows are heard to beat,
 Their *Oats* and *Barley*, *Pease* and *Wheat*.
 When *Leazers* give their Gleaning o'er,
 And pauper'd Earth affords no more,
 When Birds are all become so shy,
 At ev'ry little Noise to fly ;
 At Eve, soon after *Phæbus'* Fall,
 You'll hear the Partridge screaming Call.
 The Coveys seek their Place of Rest,
 And fly towards their humble Nest :
 The old Ones call their Young, to come,
 And with their careful Dams go home:

Look

Look sharply at the Close of Day,
 You'll see these Kinsfolk skim away :
 Observe their Flight, with steady Care;
 Mark well the Place where they repair ;
 Which in the Morning will afford,
 A Banquet for the next Day's Board.

But in the Brightness of the Day,
 They basking in the Hedges lay ;
 The glorious Sun's Meridian Heat,
 Makes that a charming sweet Retreat :
 Securely there, they basking fit,
 Nor will they such dear Mansions quit,

Unless some Noise, or Voice they hear,
And then with Speed away they steer.

Be careful; let your Steps be light,
For ev'ry trifling Noise will fright :
Except the *Quail* which lies so close,
She'll near endure the *Lurcher's* Nose.
With Patience hunt ; the charming Prey,
Will amply your Attendance pay :
Her Flights are short, observe her Fall,
You'll spring her Twice, no Doubt at all.

When stiffen'd Earth by Frost is bound
And flocking Larks bestrew the Ground.

The Cold affords mysterious Meat,
 Best nourish'd when they little eat.
 The ambient Air their Pores contrans,
 And friendly *Cold* shuts up their Veins;
 From hence the Nutriment proceeds,
 And ev'ry Grain some Fatness breeds.

But when bright *Sol* display's his Heat,
 They poorer grow, tho' more they eat;
 For in one melting, sultry Day,
 Their Fatness all perspires away.

To fire at Flocks, take proper Care,
And thus your well-prov'd *Gun* prepare ;
Observing to dispose your Charge,
As may dispense the *Shot* at large,
Of *Powder* take an equal Lot,
As you allow of circling *Shot* ;
Destruction then will scatt'ring take,
And many bleeding Victims make.

When thus prepar'd, begin to storm,
And fire amidst the rising Swarm,
And treble Slaughter you'll perform.

When

When Birds expansive rise in Air,
The Mark lies open, rais'd and fair,
And Ten Times more will dead be found,
Than if you shoot them on the Ground.

If you a *Mallard* chance to see,
Attend, and be advis'd by me :
If you're before him, hold your Arm,
His guarded Breast no Shot can harm ;
And fire behind, where, less secure,
He can the piercing *Shot* endure.

When

When rattling Winds do briskly blow,
Snites move against the Wind but flow,
 And they're so thinly clad behind,
 They seldom travel with the Wind,
 To guard against inclement Air,
 The Part which is so very bare.

The *Woodcocks* then short Flights will take,
 And *Feasants* to the Trees will make :
 Then fright them from the Boughs away,
 And learn to shoot the gazing Prey :
Poachers alone that Crime commit,
 Tis scorn'd by Men of Sense and Wit.

When

When stormy Winds offend the Skies,
 You cannot hear the *Partridge* rise ;
 It drives the *Powder* in your Face,
 And really that's a dang'rous Case.

And if, my Friend, it chance to rain,
 Take my Advice go home again,
 That Day no farther Sport affords ;
 Adieu the Fields ! Adieu the Birds !
 The *Powder* gives, and Damp will grow,
 Take my Advice then ; prithee go :

For

For should you stay, I'm sure your Gains,
Will never pay for Half your Pains!--
The Sport is o'er ! Away ! Away !
For now 'tis all in vain to stay.

Then o'er a Cup of nut-brown Ale,
Or sing a catch, or tell a Tale.
Tis Mirth that sweetens ev'ry Care.
And arms the Heart against Despair.
Fill high the sparkling joy-crown'd Bowl.
It quickens Wit, it glads the Soul.

Exalt

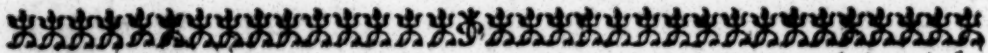
Exalt the Voice, and let the Laugh
 Be heard, as round the Board ye quaff,
 The Gods themselves are pleas'd to see,
 Mankind intranc'd in harmless glee.

Brother Adieu! Iv'e periodiz'd my Toil;
 Contented, if I meet your gen'rous Smile,
 Yet this I trust—Long at the rural Squire
 Recounts his Feats around a Winters Fire :
 Long as each Sportsman, or his rival Son,
 Shall love the Mufick of the thund'ring Gun:

Long as the Game shall hover round the

(Plain,

My Name and future Honour shall remain.



F I N I S.

